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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/690,727	10/18/2000	SHINICHI UKON	ND-361US	3288

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EXAMINER

BUI, BING Q

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2642

DATE MAILED: 03/31/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.
09/690,727

Applicant(s)

Ukon

Examiner

Bing Bui

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Oct 18, 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). and 4-5, 9 6) ☐ Other:

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DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it contains more than 150 words. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Claim Objections

2. Claims 6 and 7 are objected to because of the following informalities:

As to claim 6, line 7, "ACT" should be changed to -- ACD --;

As to claim 7, for consistency with base claim 3, the limitation "said call priority information inquiry means" contained in lines 3-4 of the recited claim should be changed to -- said call preferential connection information inquiry means --.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

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4. Claims 1-5 and 7-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Lee (U.S. Patent No. 5,537,470).

Regarding claim 1, with respect to Figure 1, Lee teaches an automatic call distribution system (i.e., "AUTOMATIC CALL DISTRIBUTOR 30") for terminating an ACD call which is an inquiry call from an unspecific caller (i.e., an unknown caller as derived at col. 1, ln 62 - col. 2, ln 3) to a predetermined called party to provide various response services, comprising:

a database (i.e., "SERVICE PROVIDER DATABASE 32") in which caller specification numbers for specifying callers (i.e., caller identifiers) and called party individual call numbers for specifying called parties (i.e., agent identifiers) are registered (i.e., stored) in a corresponding relationship to each other so that an ACD call from a certain specific caller may terminate at a specific called party (see Fig. 2, step "212" and col. 4, ln 65 - col. 5, ln 12); and

a called party individual ACD call control processing section for searching, when an ACD call is received, for a called party individual call number (i.e., agent identifier) corresponding to a caller specification number (i.e., caller identifier) for specifying the caller of the ACD call from said database (i.e., "SERVICE PROVIDER DATABASE 32") and connecting the ACD call with the called party individual specification number (see Fig. 2, step 224 and col. 5, lns 46 - 58).

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Regarding claim 2, with respect to Figure 1, Lee further teaches the call preferential connection information registration means (i.e., "SERVICE PROVIDER DATABASE 32") for storing call preferential connection information including a caller specification number for specifying a caller (i.e., caller identifier) and a called party individual call number of a called party (i.e., agent identifier) to which an ACD call from the caller is to be connected preferentially into said database (see Fig. 2, step "212" and col. 4, ln 65 - col. 5, ln 12).

Regarding claim 3, Lee further teaches means for recognizing a caller specification number from an ACD call, call preferential connection information inquiry means for inquiring said data base about the recognized caller specification number and reading out a called party individual call number corresponding to the caller specification number, and call connection means for performing connection processing of the ACD call preferentially to the called party individual call number read out by said call preferential connection information inquiry means (see Fig. 2, steps "224", "228" and "232"; and col. 5, ln 49 - col. 6, ln 14).

Regarding claim 4, Lee further teaches the call connection means includes means for performing, when the called party of the called party individual call number read out by said call preferential information inquiry means is busy or in a termination rejection state and the ACD call cannot be connected preferentially to the called party, wait processing of the ACD call for the called party of the called party individual call

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number and signaling a speech guidance for notification to the caller that the called party of the destination of the preferential connection cannot respond and is in a wait state (see Fig. 2, steps "228" and "236"; and col. 6, lns 9 - 16).

Regarding claim 5, Lee further teaches the call connection means includes means for performing, when the called party of the called party individual call number read out by said call preferential information inquiry means is busy or in a termination rejection state and the ACD call cannot be connected preferentially to the called party, wait processing of the ACT call for the called party of the called party individual call number, discriminating whether or not connection to a called party other than the called party of the called party individual call number is possible, and connecting the ACD call in the wait processing state to the called party (see Fig. 2, steps "236", "240" and "244"; and col. 6, lns 9 - 37).

Regarding claim 7, Lee further teaches when the called party of the called party individual call number readout by said call preferential connection information inquiry means is in a termination call non-connection state (i.e., busy state) wherein the called party is busy or in a termination rejection state and the ACD call cannot be connected preferentially to the called party, said call connection means performs called party individual ACD call control processing for connecting the ACD call in a unit (i.e., a queue) of a called party individual or split individual ACD call control processing for

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terminating the ACD call in a unit of an ACD split (see Fig. 2, steps "228", "236", "240" and "248"; and col. 6, lns 14 - 30).

Regarding claim 8, Lee further teaches the call preferential connection information storage means for recognizing, when an ACD call is connected to a called party by said call connection means to establish a talking state, the caller specification number and a called party individual call number of a called party who responds to the ACD call as call preferential connection information and storing the call preferential connection information into said database (see Fig. 2, steps "224", "228" and "232"; and col. 5, ln 49 - col. 6, ln 14).

Regarding claim 9, Lee further teaches the specific caller (i.e., a caller makes a call at step "220" whose data record previously stored in the service provider database at step "212" as shown in Fig. 2) call preferential connection information registration means for determining a full-service called party who should respond to an ACD call from a specific caller advance and storing the caller specification number of the specific caller and the called party individual call number of the full-service called party as call preferential connection information into said database in advance (see Fig. 2, step "212" - "224"; and col. 4, ln 53 - col. 5, ln 12).

Regarding claim 10, Lee teaches an automatic call distribution method for terminating an ACD call which is an inquiry call from an unspecific caller to a predetermined called party to provide various response services, comprising:

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a first step of recognizing a caller specification number (i.e., caller identifier such as caller CLI (Calling Line Identity) or ANI (Automatic Number Identification)) from the ACD call (see col. 4, Ins 53 - 56 and col. 5, Ins 1 - 7);

a second step of inquiring a database about the caller specification number recognized in the first step and reading out a called party individual call number of a called party registered in a corresponding relationship to the caller specification number (see Fig 2, step "224" and col 4, In 65 - col. 5, In 12), and

a third step of connecting the ACD call preferentially to the called party individual call number read out in the second step (see Fig. 2, steps "228" and "232"; and col. 6, Ins 9 - 14).

Regarding claim 11, Lee further teaches a fourth step of connecting, when a called party individual call number of a called party who is to respond to an ACD call corresponding to the caller specification number is not registered in the database as a result of the inquiry of the database about the caller specification number in the second step, the ACD call to a called party selected based on a predetermined criterion, and a fifth step of storing, when the called party selected in the fourth step responds to the ACD call to establish a talking state, the caller specification number and the called party individual call number of the called party who has responded to the ACD call as call preferential connection information into said database (see col. 5, In 67 - col. 6, In 14).

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Regarding claim 12, Lee further teaches a sixth step of determining a full-service called party who should respond to an ACD call from a specific caller in advance and storing the caller specification number of the specific caller and the called party individual call number of the full-service called party as call preferential connection information into said database in advance (see col. 5, ln 67 - col. 6, ln 8).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee (U.S. Patent No. 5,537,470) as applied to claims 1 and 3 above, and further in view of Saito et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,329,523).

Regarding claim 6, Lee further teaches the call connection means includes means for performing, when the called party of the called party individual call number read out by said call preferential information inquiry means is busy or in a termination rejection state and the ACD call cannot be connected preferentially to the called party, wait processing of the ACD call for the called party of the called party individual call

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number, discriminating whether or not connection to a called party other than the called party of the called party individual call number is possible, and connecting, when the connection is possible, the ACD call in the wait processing state to the called party (see Fig. 2, steps "236", "240" and "244"; and col. 6, lns 9 - 37).

Lee fails to explicitly teach the method in which when the connection is not possible, wait processing of the ACD call for the called party other than the called party of the called party individual call number and further discriminating the possibility of connection successively to other called parties to connect the ACD call. However, Saito et al teach a system in which a plurality of agent terminals are sequentially searches for determining whether or not an idle terminal is available to receive a customer's call (see Fig. 2 and col. 1, ln 58 - col. 2, ln 4). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to include a system in which a plurality of agent terminals are sequentially searches for determining whether or not an idle terminal is available to receive a customer's call, as taught by Saito et al, into communication system of Lee in order to provide convenience to customers especially to the ones who have little time or no patient to wait for serving.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

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Bentley et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,914,951) disclose a system in which a customer who wishes to speak to a CSR (Customer Service Representative) who has helped him customer previously may select that CSR as a customer preference.

Sumner et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,857,018) disclose different types of calls are selectively assigned for each individual agent.

Hanai et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,748,723) disclose a system in which a call is allocated to one of the destination candidates based on the source address.

Otto (U.S. Patent No. 5,703,943) discloses a system and method for completing calls to a preferred agent in an automatic call distributor.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Bing Bui whose telephone number is (703) 308-5858. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday from 7:30 to 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ahmad Matar, can be reached on (703) 305-4731. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9314 and for formal communications intended for entry (please label the response "EXPEDITED PROCEDURE") or for informal or draft communications not intended for entry (please label the response "PROPOSED" or "DRAFT").

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-4700.

Mar 22, 2003



BING BUI
PATENT EXAMINER